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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-TAIWAN RELATIONS; THE CROSS-STRAIT  
RELATIONS

¶1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused news coverage April 26-28 on the amendment to Taiwan's Labor Standards Law; on the search for eight missing scuba divers in waters off southern Taiwan; and on the unexpected appointment of former Taiwan Solidarity Union Legislator Lai Shin-yuan as the chairperson of Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council.

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, a commentary in the mass-circulation "Apple Daily" commented on speculation that Andrew Card will lead the United States delegation to Taiwan's President-elect Ma Ying-jeou's inauguration and urged Ma's team to seize the opportunity to communicate with Card. With the early disclosure that former Taiwan Solidarity Union Legislator Lai Shin-yuan will be the chairperson of Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council, the centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times," the pro-unification "United Daily News," and the pro-independence "Liberty Times" all have analyses on Lai's appointment and question Ma's decision and his motivation. End summary.

### ¶3. U.S.-Taiwan Relations

"Who Will Represent the United States to Attend [Taiwan's President-elect Ma Ying-jeou's] Inauguration?"

Edward I-hsin Chen, a professor at the Graduate Institute of American Studies in Taiwan's Tamkang University and currently a visiting fellow at the University of Chicago, opined in the mass-circulation "Apple Daily" [circulation: 520,000] (4/28):

"... What's more important is that once the leader of the United States Delegation to Ma's inauguration [former White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card] comes, how will we seize the opportunity to communicate with him?"

"This time, if [United States President George W.] Bush sends Card to lead the delegation, based on Washington's high degree of acceptance of Ma after mutual trust between Taiwan and the United States has been reduced during the last eight years of the DPP's governance, the United States certainly expects to send its good will to the new government and improve mutual relations.

"Moreover, being Bush's long-term good friend, Card has been dealing with Taiwan affairs behind the scenes and must be able to exchange ideas with Ma in various aspects. Ma's team for national security should be well prepared and pragmatically propose our country's requests and the direction of cooperation between both countries [Taiwan and the United States] in the future and provide concrete advice."

### ¶4. Cross-Strait Relations

A) Lai Shin-yuan of Ma [Ying-jeou]'s Government vs. Lai Shin-yuan of

Taiwan Independence; with the Presidential Office on the Top, Chiang Pin-kun on the Bottom; Lee Teng-hui on the Left and Lien Chan on the Right, Lai Faces Tough Challenges"

Journalists Lin Ting-yao and Hsiao Hsu-tsen analyzed in the centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" [circulation: 400,000] (4/28):

"[Taiwan's President-elect] Ma Ying-jeou borrowed talent from [former Taiwan's President] Lee Teng-hui, appointing appointed Lai Shin-yuan to be the Chairperson of Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council. This means that Ma wants to set the role and position that Taiwan will play in future U.S.-China-Taiwan relations. This is probably Ma's new government's most signaled cabinet appointment and the most crucial appointment for cross-Strait relations in the future. ...

"The 'China craze' in the KMT recently has produced a 'many-headed wagon' [Ed. Note: this expression refers to a wagon with a team of horses that pulls in many different directions]. If Ma does not do something, cross-Strait policy in the future will be 'everyone [dancing to] his own tune.' Therefore, the appointment of Lai is a warning by Ma to the KMT that 'cross-Strait policy has to listen to me!'

"Ma's decision to pick Lai is good chess and also dangerous chess. Regardless of Lai's [hardline] positions [vis-a-vis China] in the past, from the system of cross-Strait policy-making, there are many figures who are familiar with [the cross-Strait policy-making] in the KMT. Ma himself was once the Chairman of Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council. Vice President-to-be Vincent Siew has been studying cross-Strait economic and trade issues for a long time. The chairman-designate of Taiwan's Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) Chiang Pin-kun, who has to follow orders from the Mainland Affairs Council, is a key figure [in the establishment] of the platform between the KMT and the Chinese Communist Party in the past and has high-level experience in politics. It will be very difficult for

Lai to integrate and coordinate the various departments. Not to mention that the 'KMT-CCP platform,' which is outside the [formal] structure, is quite favored by the Chinese Communists. [KMT Honorary Chairman] Lien Chan does will not necessarily listen to what Lai says. ...

"Of course, there are risks and gains in Ma's [playing this] unusual card. At least for cross-Strait policy in the future, with Lai to guard the front, there will be a 'balance of power' regarding the resumption of talks between Taiwan's SEF and China's Association for Relations across the Taiwan Strait (ARATS) or the KMT-CCP platform and prevent Taiwan from tilting too much towards China. This could be an explanation to the Green camp's 5.44 million of voters, which is a political arrangement that Ma has planned carefully."

B) "Melting the Ice across the Strait? [Taiwan's President-elect] Ma [Ying-jeou] Uses Lai [Shin-yuan] as Dangerous Chess"

Journalist Lee Ming-hsien analyzed in the pro-unification "United Daily News" [circulation: 400,000] (4/28):

"The central focus of Ma's and [Taiwan's Vice President-elect Vincent] Siew's governance is [improving Taiwan's] economy. The first key to improving the economy is cross-Strait relations. But the loosening and tightening of cross-Strait policy is not in our control. Also, while senior officials in the Blue camp visit China on an intensive schedule, the appointment of Lai has the effect of cooling the overheating cross-Strait policy, just as Siew said that 'there will be a flood if the iceberg melts too fast.' However, Lai and her backer [former Taiwan's President] Lee Teng-hui have strong tendencies toward Taiwan independence. Whether this vigorous tonic delays the speed of melting of the cross-Strait iceberg or even [causes it to] 'freeze again' remains to be seen. ...

"Precisely speaking, Lai insists on Taiwan's sovereignty. In the resumption of negotiations between both sides across the Strait, while Chiang [Pin-kun, Chairman-designate of Taiwan's Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF)] and Lai will be in control of the SEF and Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council (MAC), Ma's camp hopes both Lai and Chiang, a hawk and a dove [respectively], could restrain each other and fully interpret Ma and Siew's cross-Strait policy in

between advancement and retreat. By achieving balance between 'guarding Taiwan's interests' and 'creating a way out for Taiwan,' it will never be a zero-sum game between the two sides across the Strait.

"However, the MAC is the decision-making institute and has to take responsibility for coordinating and integrating across departments. Both Chiang and the Secretary-General-designate of Taiwan's National Security Council Su Chi have access to the president. A wrestling match among three sides will probably result in orders coming from different departments. Based on Chiang and other KMT figures' experiences and high profiles, which are something Lai cannot compete with, it is feared that the MAC will not be able to guide the SEF at all. The war between the SEF and the MAC will likely be onstage again and be disadvantageous to the arrangement of cross-Strait policy."

C) "Deep Green Entering the Blue Cabinet, Big Challenges for Lai [Shin-yuan] to Accommodate"

Journalist Lee Hsin-fang analyzed in the pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 720,000] (4/28):

"Lai has been regarded as former Taiwan's President Lee Teng-hui's disciple. As we all know, Lee, who advocated the policy of 'no haste, be patient' during his governance, objects to the pan-Blue's China craze. Lee has reiterated that there is no 1992 consensus between two sides across the Strait. [Taiwan's President-elect] Ma [Ying-jeou] advocates one China with respective interpretations and recognizes the 1992 consensus. How Lai deals with the controversy over the 1992 consensus in the future will be the first challenge for her. ..."

D) "[Taiwan's President-elect] Ma [Ying-jeou]'s Insistence on Dangerous Chess; the Backlash inside the [KMT] Party Will be Hard to Predict"

Journalist Wang Yu-chung analyzed in the pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 720,000] (4/28):

"... [Taiwan's President-elect] Ma Ying-jeou uses [former Taiwan's President] Lee Teng-hui's person to take charge of Taiwan's Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) [sic - she's actually slated for the Mainland Affairs Council], there must be a point among Ma, Lee and Lai's cross-Strait policy advocacy that coincides. Especially, Lee emphasizes that Taiwan has been a country with independent sovereignty. Ma and Lee should have a consensus that the

three-links negotiation has to be undertaken under the maintenance of the status-quo and to secure Taiwan's sovereignty to take care of Taiwan's ultimate interests. Also, Lai advocates that cross-Strait negotiations have to be undertaken under the framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which is consistent with Ma's position. With Lai to take charge of the SEF [sic], 'Old Lee' has come back.

"But Ma's arrangement is still filled with dangers. Ma continues his moves, and the [KMT] party has to suffer silently. Now that [Ma] is to use Lee's person, discontent inside the party will break out sooner or later. How it will be dealt with remains to be seen. The KMT Central, the Legislative Yuan, and [KMT Honorary Chairman] Lien Chan's people will question whether Lai will recognize the five prospects achieved between [KMT Honorary Chairman] Lien Chan and [Chinese President] Hu Jintao and the KMT's party platform on cross-Strait policy. ... [S]ooner or later Ma will have to have to have a showdown with the [KMT] party over strained relations."

YOUNG